United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1418
21 June 1993

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council reiterates support for UNOSOM II's efforts to restore law and order in Somalia; United Nations spokesman says operations in Mogadishu successfully completed; eleven Somali political organizations urge deployment of UNOSOM II forces throughout country to continue disarmament.

+ Secretary-General, in Geneva after visit to Ukraine, meets with Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq; will make one-day working visit to Bonn on Wednesday.

+ Secretary-General congratulates Malawi on 14 June referendum; welcomes vote for multi-party system; says United Nations will continue to support democratization process.

+ UNICEF representative tells World Conference on Human Rights that universality of children's rights is not debatable; FAO Director-General says right to food should be most fundamental of all rights.

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The Security Council, in a statement issued on Friday by its President, Juan Antonio Yañez-Barnuevo (Spain), reiterated its support for the efforts of the Secretary-General, his Special Representative and the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) to restore law and order in Somalia. UNOSOM II has undertaken several actions in Mogadishu since unprovoked attacks by Somali gunmen killed 23 Pakistani peace-keepers on 5 June.

The Council stressed the international community's resolve to establish a safe environment in Somalia allowing the delivery of humanitarian aid, and to promote national reconciliation and reconstruction in the country.

In a related development, eleven Somali political organizations today issued a statement urging UNOSOM II to deploy forces throughout the country to disarm "all the people". The organizations said law and order would easily be

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restored after disarmament, and assured UNOSOM II of their full support. They also said they were extremely sorry for the meaningless assault launched by some Somalis against UNOSOM II forces.

A United Nations spokesman said that assertive disarmament operations in southern Mogadishu had been successfully completed, and attention had now turned towards peacefully disarming factions throughout the country. He underlined that the conflict in south Mogadishu had been isolated and that the rest of the country had continued to cooperate with the Organization.

In Nairobi tomorrow, donor countries, non-governmental organizations and United Nations agencies will consult to identify the most urgent humanitarian aims to be pursued in the wake of the crisis, the spokesman said. Meanwhile in New York, Under-Secretaries-General Jan Eliasson and Kofi Annan will meet with leaders of non-governmental organizations to discuss humanitarian assistance and economic reconstruction in Somalia.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, back in Geneva after a visit to Ukraine, met today with Tariq Aziz, Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq, according to a United Nations spokesman. On Wednesday, the Secretary-General would travel to Bonn, Germany, for a one-day working visit.

In advance of the Secretary-General's visit to Bonn, Under-Secretary-General Vladimir Petrovsky, Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva, would participate in hearings of the German Federal Constitutional Court on Germany's contributions to peace-keeping operations. Mr. Petrovsky was expected to make a statement to those hearings, the spokesman said.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, in a statement issued today, has congratulated the people of Malawi for the exemplary manner in which they participated in the country's referendum on 14 June. He welcomed their vote for the multi-party system in a free and fair referendum, which had been monitored by the Joint International Observer Group.

The Secretary-General was particularly pleased that the Government had decided to set up a machinery to implement the referendum results, with measures to legalize parties, reform the constitution and establish a time-table for a general election, the statement said. He urged all parties to cooperate in working out the details of those transitional arrangements and to resolve their differences peacefully, saying that the United Nations would continue to support the democratization process.

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There can be no debate on the universality of human rights when it comes to children, Steven Lewis, special representative of the Executive Director of

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the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), told the World Conference on Human Rights today. "Where the rights and needs of children are concerned, universality is not negotiable and conditionality is unacceptable," he said.

On Friday, Edouard Saouma, Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), told the Conference that the right to food should be recognized as the most fundamental of all human rights. He said the malnutrition afflicting hundreds of millions of people was scandalous, considering that the world had enough resources to feed everyone adequately.

Rigoberta Menchu, Goodwill Ambassador for the International Year of the World's Indigenous People and Nobel Peace Prize winner in 1992, said the world's problems could not be solved without the full participation of the dispossessed elements of society. She stressed that peace could not be seen as a dream or a myth; the cruelty suffered by indigenous people showed that it must be a daily effort of humanity. Austria's Federal Minister for Women's Affairs called for the creation of an international court to protect and promote the human rights of women. She said sexual equality must become an integral component of all human rights institutions, and also called for the establishment of a special rapporteur to review specific violations of women's rights.

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